

The Scrolls

Helping CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V24 N20

May 15, 2022

WAY OUT

"Manna from Heaven" Exodus 16:1-36

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is the son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead..

"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word." 1 Peter 1:3





The Exodus is the *theologically* seminal event in the Old Testament, linking Abraham, Moses, and David. Allusions to it are found throughout the Old and New Testaments. D. A. Carson calls it "the greatest redemptive event in the Old Testament which subsequent revelation points to again and again and again" ("Exodus: Understanding One of the Bible's Major Themes," desiringgod.org/interviews/exodusunderstanding-one-of-the-bibles-major-themes).

Typologically speaking, the Exodus event is the source of three New Testament metaphors used with reference to Jesus. First, John identifies Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world," a clear allusion to the Passover lamb that died, so that those who applied its blood to the top and both sides of their doorframes would be spared the death of their firstborn sons (Ex 12:21-23). Paul makes John's allusion to Passover explicit, calling Jesus, "our Passover lamb." Borrowing imagery from the Feast of Unleavened Bread, he says, "Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1Co 5:7-8). Paul's point is that his readers need to become what they are in Christ. One commentator explains: "In one sense they were already free of leaven: their trust in Christ had removed their sins. However in another sense they possessed leaven, since they had tolerated, and were still tolerating, sin in their midst . . . God had sanctified them in their position, but they were in need of progressive sanctification . . . The mention of the removal of leaven before the Passover led Paul to develop his analogy further. Paul viewed the Passover lamb as a *type of Christ* . . . Christ, the final Passover Lamb, had already died. Therefore it was all the more important that the believers clean out the remaining leaven immediately" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Corinthians," 2022 ed., 95-96, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1corinthians. pdf).

Second, Jesus identifies himself with the manna

that sustained the lives of the Israelites for forty years. "Jesus, referring to the Israelites' manna (John 6:31, 49, 58), called Himself 'the true [spiritual] Bread from heaven' (John 6:32), 'the Bread of God . . . from heaven' (John 6:33), 'the Bread of life' (John 6:35, 48), and 'the Living Bread . . . from heaven' (John 6:51). Everyone who believes in Him, He said, would have eternal life (John 6:33, 51, 58)" (John D. Hannah, "Exodus," in The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament, 135). In the same Johannian discourse, Jesus presses the metaphor, explaining to the Jews, "Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven, Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:49-51). His words shocked the Jews but only because of their obduracy, for in the same way that literal bread must be literally eaten to appropriate its life-giving benefits, so also must the metaphoric bread, namely, Jesus' flesh, be metaphorically eaten, namely, by believing, to appropriate its spiritually life-giving bene-

Third, Paul identifies Jesus as the metaphoric "rock" that quenched the thirst of the Israelites in the wilderness. About them he writes: "They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ" (1Co 10:3-4). The apostle is alluding to the fact that the Israelites ate miraculously provided food and miraculously provided water in the wilderness. When they came to Rephidim on their way to Sinai, the people had no water to drink, so they accused Moses, saying, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" (Ex 17:3). The Lord responded by commanding Moses to strike the rock at Horeb with his staff, and when he did, water came out for the people to drink. Jesus isn't literally a rock, any more than he is literally manna, but metaphorically he is both true bread and living water (Jn 4:10-14) that gives eternal life.

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD



Read Exodus 16:1-36 Consider 16:11-36

11 The LORD said to Moses, 12 "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'"

13 That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. 14 When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. 15 When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was.

Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. 16 This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'"

17 The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. 18 And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.

19 Then Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning."

20 However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them.

21 Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. 22 On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much – two omers for each person – and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. 23 He said to them, "This is what the LORD commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'"

24 So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it. 25 "Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today. 26 Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any."

27 Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. 28 Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? 29 Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where they are on the seventh day; no one is to go out." 30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

31 The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. 32 Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the wilderness when I brought you out of Egypt.'"

33 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omer of manna in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for the generations to come."

34 As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna with the tablets of the covenant law, so that it might be preserved. 35 The Israelites at manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they at manna until they reached the border of Canaan.

36 (An omer is one-tenth of an ephah.)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- In the margin next to v. 12 write, "Cf. vv. 6-8."
- Circle "quail" in v. 13.
- Box "like" indicating comparison in v. 14.
- Underline "What is it?" in v. 15.
- Circle "bread" in v. 15.
- Circle "omer" in vv. 16, 18, 22, 32, 33, 36.
- Bracket the commands in vv. 16, 19, 23, 25, 32.
- Highlight v. 18.
- Circle "Sabbath" in v. 29.
- Circle "manna" in v. 31.
- Box "so" indicating purpose in v. 32.
- Box "so that" indicating result in v. 34.
- Circle "forty years" in v. 35.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

- 1. What does the provision of "meat" in the evening and "bread" in the morning prove?
- 2. The provision of manna overshadows the provision of quail in the narrative. How so?
- 3. Compare manna (vv. 14, 21, 31; cf. Nu 11:7-9) to the familiar bread you eat.
- 4. The LORD gives instructions regarding gathering manna. How much are the Israelites to gather and how often?
- 5. As far as you can tell, do these restrictions serve any spiritual purpose? Explain.
- 6. Describe the *purpose* Sabbath is intended to serve.
- 7. The LORD gives instructions regarding the manna to *test* his people. Some failed his *test* in one way, some in another. How so?
- 8. Why preserve an omer of manna for generations to come?
- 9. Read John 6:32-35, 48-51. How is Jesus like and unlike the manna the Israelites ate in the wilderness?
- 10. **Discussion:** Talk about what the Israelites should have learned from God's testing then and its relevance now.

EXPLORE RESOURCES

3

Commentary On The Text

During the first three months after leaving Egypt, the Israelites grumble *three* times before reaching Sinai – at Marah (15:22-26), in the Desert of Sin (16:1-35), and at Rephidim (17:1-7). Each time the LORD uses their circumstances to "put them to the test" (15:25) to assess their willingness to "listen carefully to the LORD . . . and do what is right in his eyes," and "pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees" (15:26). Notice that each incident is marked by an escalation in the Israelites' irate response. In the first instance, their grumbling involves a simple inquiry, "What are we to drink?" (15:24). In the second, it's accompanied by an accusation, "But you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death" (16:3). And in the third, it's accompanied by a quarrel followed by an accusation, "So they quarreled with Moses and said, 'Give us water to drink' . . . and they grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?"" (17:2, 3). Desperate people say hysterical things. So fearing for their lives, they question the integrity of the LORD. Their accusations question his integrity with respect to the covenant he made with Abraham (Ge 12:1-3; 15:18; cf. Ex 2:24; 6:8). Their words imply he did not intend to fulfill it. Their accusations also question his integrity with respect to their emancipation (cf. Ex 6:2-8; 14:15-31). He secured their departure from Egypt and ushered them across the Red Sea, apparently only to let them die in the wilderness. Finally, their accusations question his purpose for them (6:7). Their words imply he did not intend to take them as his own people and be their own God. God can test the integrity of his people (15:25; 16:4) because their integrity is questionable, but his people cannot test the integrity of their God (17:2; cf. Mt 4:7) because his integrity is beyond question. Of course, their accusations fly in the face of God's purpose in the Exodus, namely, to gain glory for himself in the eyes of both the Egyptians and the Israelites (cf. 14:4, 17, 18).

Exodus 16:1-36 contains a record of the second in the triad of Israel's grumblings against Moses and the LORD before reaching Sinai. One month to the day after leaving Egypt, the Israelites come to the Desert of Sin, between Elim and Sinai, where the community finds itself without food. They leave Rameses with unleavened bread (12:34), but it has long since been eaten. And as one commentator says, "Like all pastoralists, they were very loath to slaughter their own beasts (cf. Nu. 11:22), which was the only alternative to a diet of milk and cheese in the desert" (R. Alan Cole, Exodus, TOTC, 130). Looking back, life in Egypt looked better through the eyes of imagination. "There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted" (16:3a). It wasn't. Looking forward, life in the wilderness looked bleak again, through the eyes of imagination. "But you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death" (v. 3b). Rather than respond in wrath, the LORD responds in grace. He tells Moses, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning, you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God'" (vv. 11-12). That evening and the following morning, he provided food for them to eat—quail in the evening and *manna*, a bread like or grain like food in the morning—and apparently every morning thereafter.

But with the provision of food, the LORD gives instructions with regard to gathering the manna to "test them and see whether they will follow [his] instructions" (v. 4). He instructs them to gather an omer per person, the daily ration. This they are to do five days a week. On the sixth day they are to gather twice as much, since none will be provided on the seventh, because it "is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD" (v. 23; cf. vv. 25-26). Only on the sixth day can the manna be kept overnight. On the other days, none of it can be kept until morning. Some of the Israelites fail God's test either one way or another. Some keep it until morning, only to find it full of maggots (v. 20), and others go out on the seventh day to gather it, only to find none there, so earning the LORD's rebuke (v. 28). When the people follow the LORD's instructions, they are able to gather enough on the sixth day for the seventh and it does not stink or get maggots in it (v. 24). This goes on for forty years in the wilderness. Note that as one commentator observes: "The Israelites were not completely separate from other people during their years in the wilderness. As they traveled from place to place, they would meet travelers and settlements of nomadic or local tribes from time to time. They evidently traded with these people (cf. Deut. 2:6-7). Consequently their total diet was not just manna, milk, and a little meat, though manna was their most staple commodity" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Exodus," 2022 ed., 153, planobiblechapel.org/ tcon/notes/pdf/ exodus.pdf).

To commemorate how the LORD provided, the Israelites are to take a daily ration of manna and preserve it in a jar for the benefit of generations to come — those not privileged to see with their own eyes what God did when he brought his people out of Egypt. "We have no knowledge of the fate of this particular manna, preserved in a sealed jar, nor do we know when it met its end. Probably it did not survive the capture of the Ark by the Philistines, 1 Sam. 4:11" (George A. F. Knight, *Theology as Narration*, 119).

The lasting significance of this narrative is found in what it teaches about the LORD. He is faithful. His integrity cannot be questioned. He is longsuffering and compassionate toward his people. It is also found in what it teaches about obedience. Obedience is what the LORD requires of his people. What's more, experience confirms that obedience is the better way to go

Word Studies/Notes

- v. 13 *quail* Cf. Nu 11:31-32. "In the fall this small game bird, similar to pheasant and grouse, migrates south from Palestine and Arabia to Central Africa, and in the spring it returns. Egyptian art depicts people catching the birds in hand nets" (John D. Hannah, "Exodus," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 134). "There have been numerous reports of migrating quail passing through the Sinai region from Africa. It is said that by the time the quail reach the desert they are so tired they can be captured by hand. The miraculous feeding of the people during the forty years may then have followed a pattern already established by nature. There is not indication of this in the text, however" (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 276).
- v. 15 *What is it?* "The Israelites did not know what the strange frostlike material was, so they asked $[m\bar{a}n\ h\hat{u}']$ 'what is it?'—a question which then serves as a folk-etymology for the name 'manna,' in the vernacular, 'whazit?'" (John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 3, *Exodus*, 225).
- v. 15 *bread* Cf. verse 2, "food from heaven" (GNT). "If bread is to be taken in its old sense of 'food' (as *leh*□*em* seems to have meant originally), then this promise could cover both the quails and the manna (R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, TOTC, 130). See verse 16, "This is the *food* that the LORD has given you to eat" (GNT). "Since the Hebrew word for 'food' is the generic term 'bread,' it is customary to think of the manna as bread, or as bread-like food. The description of the manna in this passage, however, suggests that it was not simply a kind of bread. It was something more than bread" (Sailhamer, 277-78).
- v. 16 *omer* Cf. "one-tenth of an ephah" (v. 36). "That is, possibly about 3 pounds or about 1.4 kilograms; also in verses 18, 32, 33 and 36" (*The NIV Study Bible*, margin ^a16). The daily ration per person is "a quantity set at one omer, about two and one-third liters or two quarts, by dry measure, for each member of a given household" (Durham, 225).
- v. 18 too much, too little Does this suggest something miraculous? Commentators are divided in their answers. On the one hand, "Nothing miraculous may be intended, but merely that they pooled the manna collected, and each kept the agreed ration of an omer per head. Paul certainly seems to understand it in this way in 2 Corinthians 8:14, 15" (Cole, 132). But on the other, "Each day when they measured what they had gathered, the amount was just what each needed (Ex 16:17-18). The text is clear that this was not the result of their own calculations, but was another sign that God was intimately involved in providing for each of them" (Sailhamer, 273-74).

- v. 29 *Sabbath* "The Israelites had not yet observed the Sabbath (v. 23) before now. As slaves in Egypt, they had probably worked seven days a week. However, God was blessing them with a day of rest, and was now preparing them for the giving of the fourth commandment (20:8-11). This is the first reference to the Sabbath as such in Scripture: "See, the LORD has given you the Sabbath; ... Remain, everyone, in his place; no one is to leave his place on the seventh day." So the people rested on the seventh day' (vv. 29-30)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Exodus," 2022 ed., 152, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/exodus.pdf).
- v. 31 manna "Clearly, the Israelites had never seen or tasted anything like it before or since. They tried to describe its looks and taste by comparing it to 'thin flakes like frost' (Ex 16:14) and by saying it was 'white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey' (v. 31). (We should note further that manna is also described in Nu 11:7-9). After eating it for over a year, they developed ways to prepare and cook it. It was ground or crushed and either bolded in a pot or baked, It quickly rotted if left until morning (Ex 16:20), and 'when the sun grew hot, it melted away' (v. 21), unless it was the Sabbath, in which case it was miraculously preserved (vv. 23-27). In Psalm 78:24 manna is called 'the food of angels,' in Nehemiah 9:20 it is associated with God's giving Israel his 'good Spirit,' and in 1 Corinthians 10:3 it is called 'spiritual food.' At one point the Israelites grew tried of their manna and complained that it was only 'light food' (Nu 21:5; NIV 'miserable food')" (Sailhamer, 278; for a description of naturalistic explanations for the quail and manna see Durham, 224-25; Cole, 133; and Constable, 152-53).
- v. 35 *forty years*"The mention of the forty years that they ate manna (v. 35) anticipates God's judgment of this generation in Numbers 14. It is worthy of note that the account in Numbers 14 follows a second incident with manna and quail (Nu 11:4-35). Moreover, it was because of their lack of faith and trust in God (14:11) that Israel remained in the wilderness forty years and was not allowed to enter the Promised Land (14:21-23). Then, at the end of the forty years, on the day after the Passover when they entered the land of Canaan, 'the manna stopped . . . but that year they ate of the produce of Canaan' (Jos 5:12)" (Sailhamer, 274). It seems verses 35-36 were written looking back after the Israelites entered Canaan and after the omer was no longer a popular unit of measure.

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Obedience is the better way to go because the LORD's integrity is unquestionable.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

When my kids were growing up, we tried to provide healthier breakfast options – eggs, fruit, or even homemade pancakes or waffles. My daughter spent the night with a friend and was surprised to discover the glory of freezer waffles that simply popped in a toaster. Apparently, I was holding out on her. Summer was a breakfast goldmine and "vacation cereal" was anticipated and talked about throughout the year. Isn't it interesting how we can be so easily distracted by what others have or disappointed by feeling deprived of something? The Israelites looked back fondly of their time in Egypt where all their needs were met. Umm... Something here doesn't quite add up. How terrible were their perceived conditions for them to look back fondly on a period of slavery? When we focus on our own needs or wants, we quite often miss out on the Lord's obvious blessing. God rescued the Israelites. Just two months before, He miraculously made a way out of slavery and turned bitter, undrinkable water into a thirst-quenching, soul-satisfying delight. What made the Israelites simmer in discontent, doubting the Lord's current or future provision? The same thing that makes us doubt His goodness today. My kids had a wonderful breakfast, yet they weren't content. They were ready to trade the blessing of homemade waffles for a cheap imitation. Are you missing the Lord's blessing because you focused on your circumstances? Are you trading His blessing for a cheap worldly imitation? Turn your eyes to Him. Revel in His miraculous provision. We're praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Exodus 16:1-36.

- 1. Why were the Israelites grumbling?
- 2. How did the Lord provide for the Israelites?
- 3. Describe what manna would have looked like.

What Do You Think?

Why is it important that God provided enough manna on the sixth day to observe the Sabbath?

What Do You Do?

For breakfast every day this week eat the same thing. Were you bored with your meal at the end of the week? How do you think the Israelites felt after eating manna for every meal for 40 years?

CORE COMPETENCY: Jesus Christ

I believe that Jesus Christ is fully God/perfectly man and died for my sins.

MEMORY VERSE: Philippians 4:19

"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

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OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17) *I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15) *I choose to do the right things in my relation-ships with others*

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gosnel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for 12 years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Central Bible Church in 1998. He and his wife Ruth have one son, Zach.

Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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Material researched, written and supervised by Dr. Tom Bulick.

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8001 Anderson Boulevard Fort Worth, Texas 76120 817-274-1315 wearecentral.org